

2-2014

Enacted Metadata: Combining Content and Metadata

Susannah Cleveland

Bowling Green State University, clevells@bgsu.edu

Elizabeth Hertenstein

Bowling Green State University, eherten@bgsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/ul_pub



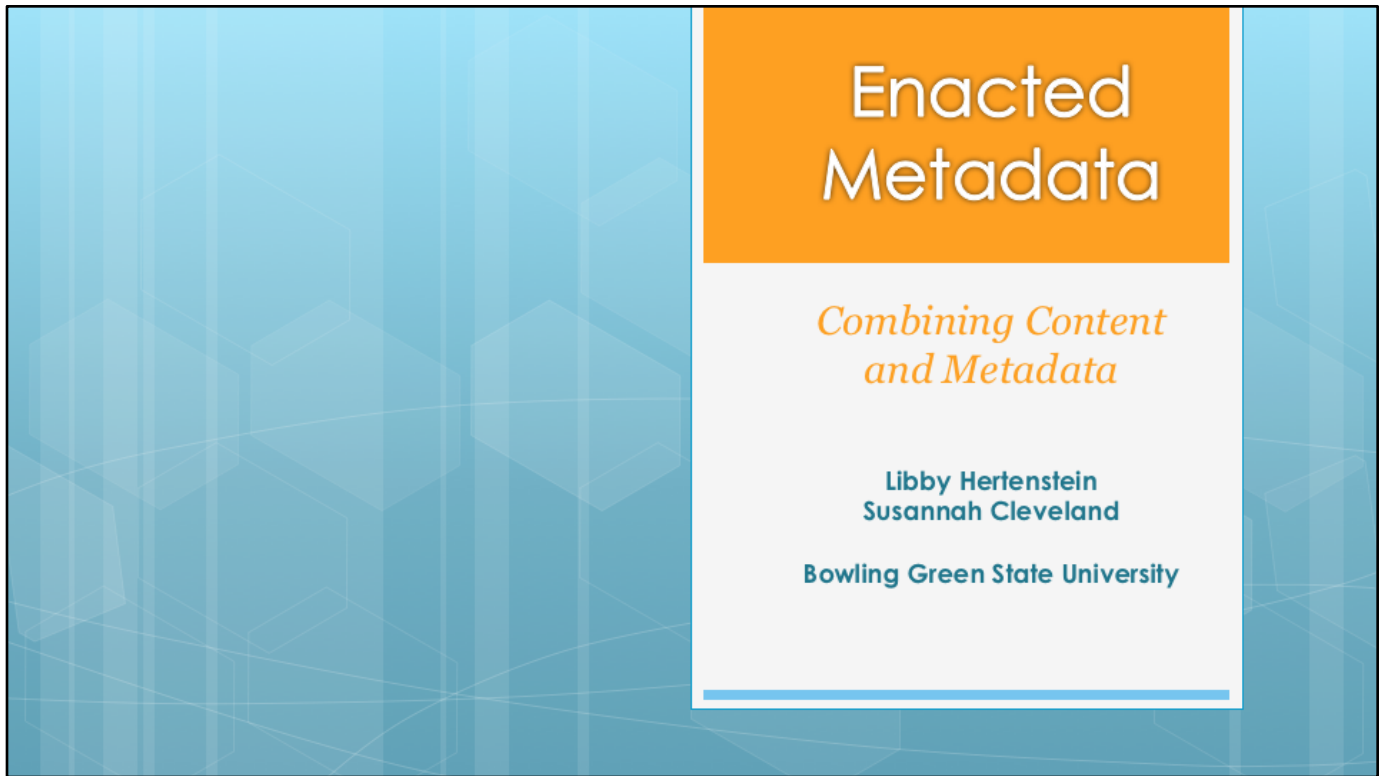
Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Cleveland, Susannah and Hertenstein, Elizabeth, "Enacted Metadata: Combining Content and Metadata" (2014). *University Libraries Faculty Publications*. 47.

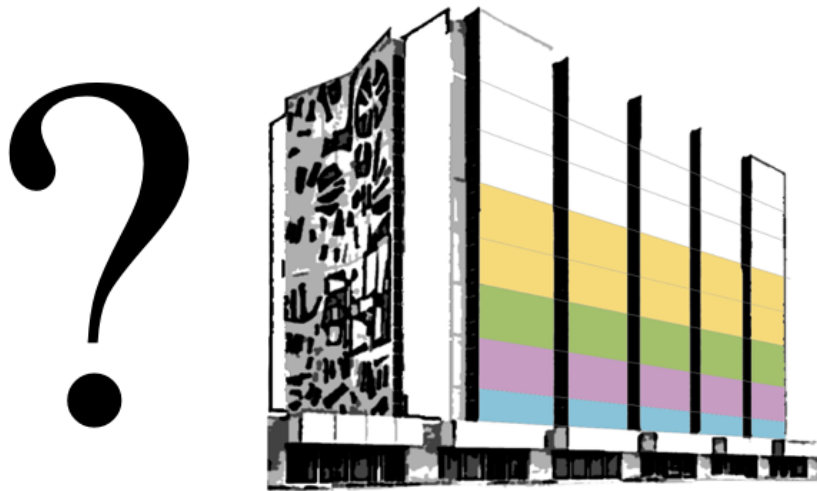
https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/ul_pub/47

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the University Libraries at ScholarWorks@BGSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in University Libraries Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@BGSU.



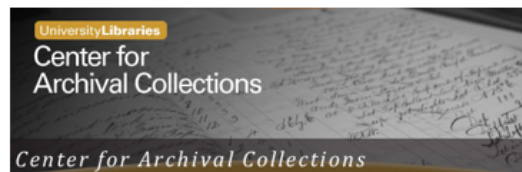
Music Library Association, Spring 2014

The Big Question



What do you do when your library has 5 floors worth of special collections, most of which are housed in closed stacks - not browseable by the general public - covering topics that many users don't expect to find in a library and, as such, don't expect to use in their research process? With extensive special collections relating to popular culture, Bowling Green State University faces this problem daily, and we decided to tackle it by creating what we're calling "enacted metadata" videos - short videos that describe and show off objects from the collections, wherein the metadata becomes a spoken or enacted part of the video, completely enmeshed with and inseparable from images of the object, both still and in use.

Our Collections



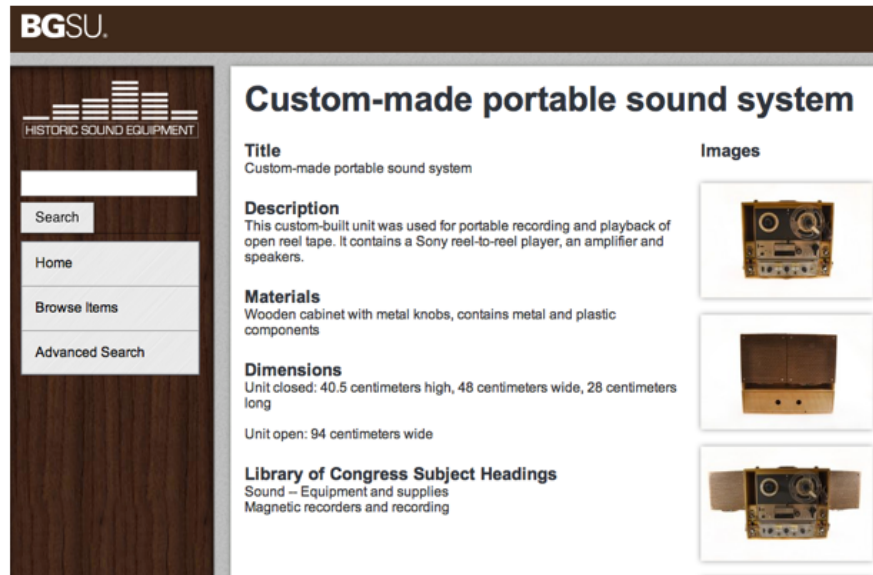
Our special collections contain many unique cultural artifacts and ephemera that document the everyday life and material culture from the 1850s to the present day. In looking at themes that ran across all collections, and we decided that one that would highlight these holdings would be teen culture. Our special collections include The Browne Popular Culture Library, The Music Library and Sound Recordings Archives, The Curriculum Resource Center, and The Center for Archival Collections. They contain such disparate objects relating to teen culture as dance manuals, dating handbooks, adolescent popular literature, comics, action figures, popular music, magazines, girls' handwritten diaries, a juke box, and much, much more.

Historically, these materials, if cataloged at all, have been described at the collection level which works well for patrons *expecting* to find an object or type of object in the collection, but less well for new -- and particularly undergraduate -- patrons who would not expect to find more than books in the library, and especially not objects like figurines from the *Simpson's* or scholarship on music used in *South Park*. The challenge was how to inform our patrons that these objects exist *and* how to help them see the scholarly potential of studying them.

Outreach



Like Susannah previously mentioned, University Libraries understood the importance of having and utilizing traditional cataloging methods to highlight our collections and materials. But we also understood the need to seek out and experiment with new technology and forms of communication with our patrons for the purpose of self-promotion, formal and informal. It is important to note that the goal of this communication didn't necessarily conform to the goals of our library catalog. Therefore we explored these new platforms with two ideas in mind, one for formal visibility and one for informal visibility.



Our first real experiment with formal visibility consisted of participating in a platform created by the state of Ohio to highlight cultural heritage items and digitization projects. Projects were housed in a statewide platform called the Digital Resource Commons, or the DRC. Institutions were given the ability to have a DRC module to put their materials in. Materials in the BGSU module included our Vintage paper back collection from the Browne Popular Culture Library, the Centennial Memories project which highlighted University Archives materials, and our Nickel Weeklies collection, also from the Browne Popular Culture Library. After realizing the shortfalls and impending closure of the DRC platform we started to use Omeka to create further exhibition space for our collections. The benefits of Omeka included the price, free and also the ability to create themes and professional looking exhibitions in house using personnel resources we had.

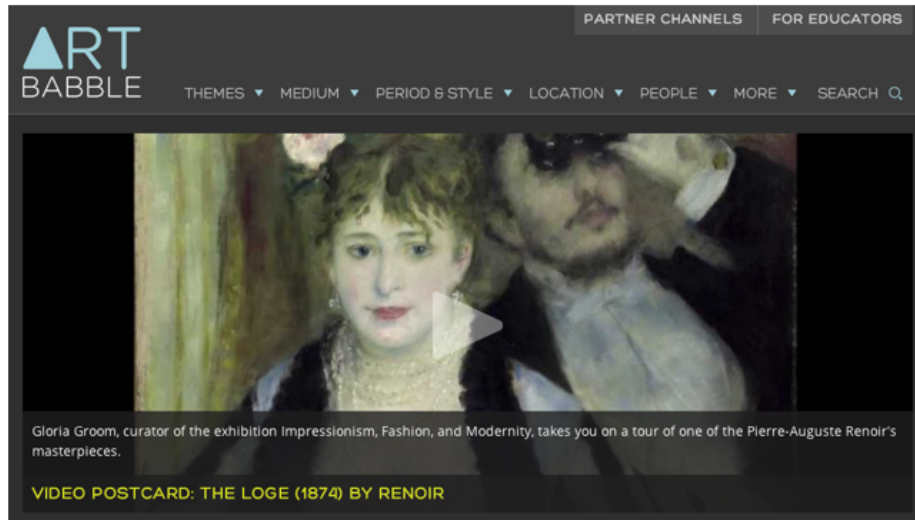
Outreach



We also participated in informal outreach. Examples of informal social media promotion we've undertaken are things that have become common place in libraries today including: using resources like facebook, creating tumblr pages for collections, where mini- exhibitions could be created and highlighted. Creating a youtube channel for videos created by our collections and probably most interesting for me personally, the sleevefacing campaign. For those of you who don't know what sleevefacing is we take images of album covers and reproduce try to recreate them.

Like Harvard Art Museum we had our own take on these types of videos. You could also say our experimentation with creating videos like Harvard foreshadowed this project. Probably one of our personal favorites of these videos was the dance video, which consisted of students performing instructional videos for various types of dances.

As we explored ways to highlight unexpected and non-standard library collections, we started by looking to museums for guidance. Like museums, library collections are built through careful curation and documentation, but unlike museums most libraries do not have the capacity and facilities to create extensive exhibit space to highlight relationships between objects. We wondered how museums were taking these traditional exhibition strategies and expanding them to the digital realm.



First we stumbled upon ArtBabble, a repository of videos with contributions from a variety of art collections all over the world. This site reveals that the world of museums have come to depend on the video format for a number of different roles, including behind-the-scenes tours of collections, promotion, and documentation of conservation efforts. When we began this project, few museums were using video to shed light on specific objects, rather than simply to promote exhibits or events, but this recent video postcard about Renoir's *The Loge* from the Art Institute of Chicago shows a trend in that direction and mirrors some of our intent with this project.

Harvard Art Museums had begun using an approach very similar to what we were considering and had started posting videos as "Object Discussions," wherein a curator describes the unique aspects of drawings from their collections while explaining the cultural context and scholarship surrounding the object. [embed part of one of their

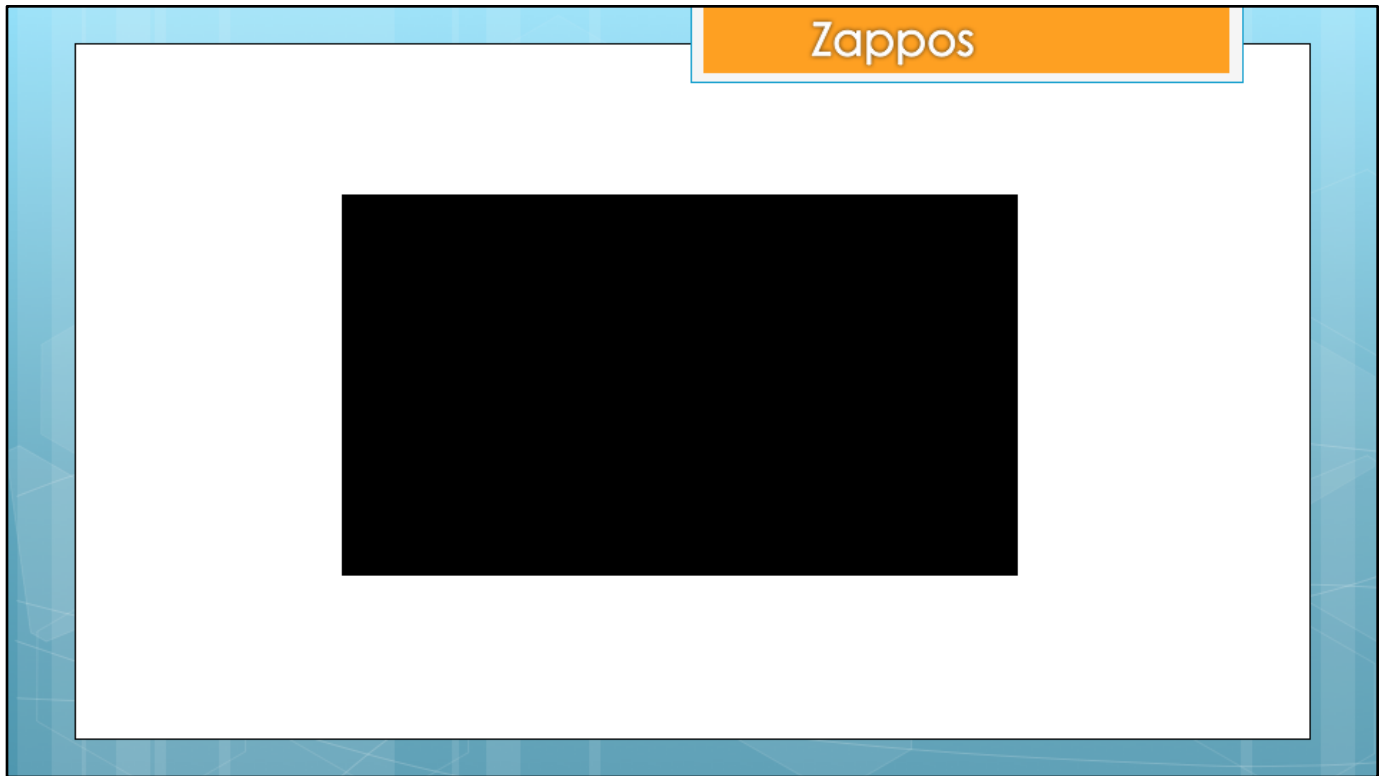
Zappos

personality
+ marvelous consistency

librarian love



These examples were great, but we soon realized that the gold standard for what we wanted to achieve was the Zappos video. Zappos is an online shoe vendor with an emphasis on customer service, which includes extensive product descriptions to increase the customer's knowledge about each shoe before ordering. These videos display personality and pep while keeping to a standard set of information that reflects a strong sense of consistency that appeals to the librarian eye.



Each video includes brand name, model, and details about colors and materials (including alternatives), all accompanying a constant demonstration to show how the shoe moves, flexes, and so on with standard poses and moves. Most are right around a minute, making them convenient for quick viewing, with no real time or buffering commitment. Here's an example.

Meanwhile, further down the page...



Fit Survey: **80%** Felt true to size | **100%** Felt true to width | **75%** No arch support

Item Information

- [View the size chart](#)
- When dangers afoot it's time to show your steely resolve! Justice is imminent when you're rocking the heroic style of the [Chuck Taylor® All Star® Hi - DC Comics® Superman™](#) kicks from [Converse®](#)!
- Canvas uppers with iconic Superman graphic print or Superman logo.
- Canvas lining and a cushioned footbed provides all-day comfort.
- Traditional lace-up closure with metallic eyelets detail.
- Signature [Chuck Taylor All Star](#) iconic designs like the rubber [cap toe](#), textured front bumper, contrast sidewall trim, dual air vent portholes on medial side and All Star heel patch.
- Low profile midsole.
- Vulcanized rubber outsole.
- Imported.

[View Zappos.com Glossary of Terms](#)

In the Zappos model, the videos supplement the text-based metadata. These textual descriptions repeat much of the same data from the video to keep that information searchable, though it is arguably less compelling than the video version.

As we buried ourselves in shoe shopping and called it research, we realized that these videos are not merely informative, but are also part of a relationship-building effort with customers, something that would be, of course, valuable to libraries as well. There is a social experience in watching video that is not present when reading text. The user gains a greater understanding of the product – or, in our case, a library object or collection -- through viewing the video while also building trust and community with the content provider.

All of these experiences together convinced us that short videos -- so called "enacted metadata" because they would include key elements that served to describe the objects in the body of the video -- could be more successful than traditional textual or 2d-image surrogate records in conveying information that helps end users select closed-stack materials to expand their research beyond traditional text-based objects they have come to expect from the library. Text description is of course still necessary for searching and indexing, but finding aids and catalog records may be more effectively enhanced by these surrogate records in different media. A finding aid can be populated with links to videos for each object listed to show potential users *what these objects are*, not just what we've decided to call them. Thus, enacted metadata was born.

First Steps...

Order Equipment and Hire Staff

Nikon D5100 Digital Camera	\$780
Hot Light Westcott	\$100
Microphone Stand	\$70
Lavalier Mic	\$800
Impact Background Stand	\$100
Background Alley Backdrop	\$75
Tripod Manfrotto Head	\$550
4 terabyte hard drives	\$800 (\$500)
Student Videographer	\$8.90/hr

We got a grant from the IMLS to make videos!

Production

- Select materials from the collections
- Decide on video format
- Script video and film
- Edit and view video (possibly re-edit) in YouTube
- Assign metadata and grant logo
- Create collection in Omeka

Production included several steps.

Examples

Results



[Cylinder Recordings & their Carriers](#)
Published on December 5, 2013, 4:19 minutes long

Results



[Simpson's Memorabilia at BGSU's Pop Culture Library](#)
Published June 13, 2013, 3 minutes long

Results



[Invisible Ink Collection with Chris Woodyard](#)
Published July 30, 2013, 2 minutes long

Benefits

Rich content exposure

The benefits of this strategy are still coming to light. First and most obviously, this approach gives us a way to exhibit content more richly and allows users to see an object in time and space before visiting the library.

Benefits

Exploit Fair Use

It also allows us a little more leeway with copyright. Because so much of our collections are well-copyrighted, we've been hesitant with approaching ambitious digital projects. By focusing on the materials as virtual collections and in situ, we feel more confidently that we're working within fair use guidelines.

Benefits

Highlight collection connections

This strategy also allows us to show connections between collections. One upcoming video that we mentioned earlier will include one of our theory professors who has published on the music of *Southpark* describing his research. We'll pull recordings from our own collection but also plushy dolls and action figures from the pop culture collection to provide visual context and interest.

Benefits

User engagement

Recruiting participants for the videos has been a great engagement activity for us. As we talk to potential speakers – mainly faculty and graduate students – we have fascinating conversations about their research interests and needs and the library's role in meeting those needs.

Benefits

Reveal scholarly potential

We also hope – though we're still in the early stages of promoting this angle – to help students see the scholarly potential of these materials. In addition to confusion that users face with discovering what is in the collections, they also grapple with finding academic angles on popular culture collections. These videos will help bring out some larger cultural themes and illuminate avenues of inquiry related to these objects. Ideally, graduate students teaching introduction to pop culture classes could embed these in their courses to demonstrate potential research paths and also to provide cursory introductions to aspects of the collections.

Lessons Learned

Staffing

As with any project there are benefits and there are lessons learned and challenges that are encountered. One of the most difficult task of any projects is coordinating individuals to work on a large and lengthy grant project. This issue was also a problem for this grant because several individuals involved in the original grant proposal were ultimately unable to participate given time constraints, retirements, or accepting positions at different institutions.

Lessons Learned

Identifying roles

Related to this issue was the challenge of identifying clear roles for each person. At the beginning of the grant we had rough ideas about people's role in the grant project and the idea was to ultimately flesh out these roles more definitively once the grant got underway. Ultimately, we could have been more successful in fleshing out these roles. Finally student work hours also became an issue especially with the adoption of the Affordable Health Care Law.

Lessons Learned

Recruiting and scheduling participants

Challenges also presented themselves in filming and getting individuals to participate. A challenge in filming we encountered included the issue with one of the sorority houses on campus. Evidently they had a resident ghost and unfortunately they didn't want to publicize this so they decline our request to film at their location. Individuals were also hesitant to be filmed on camera which was a challenge. Finally even scheduling people to participate in the project was problematic.



Still to come

Single landing page
More videos
Promotion
Make workflows and tips public

We still have half a year left in the grant period – following a fortuitous extension – and hope to create quite a few more videos. We’re getting a better handle on the workflow with our student videographer and how to batch filming jobs, editing jobs, etc. Soon, we will have a landing page for the whole project in our library’s digital gallery so that their location can be centralized and co-located with project information. This will improve discoverability; heretofore, we’ve been relying on serendipitous discovery in YouTube. Following the completion of all videos, we’ll be doing strategic promotion of the project, working directly with teachers on campus to encourage use in their instruction. We hope to continue making enacted metadata videos once the grant period is over, but at a leisurely pace and specifically as needed. Finally, we’ll be writing up our workflows with accompanying equipment lists to share publicly.

Contact

Libby Hertenstein
Cataloger & Metadata Librarian
lherten@bgsu.edu

Susannah Cleveland
Head, Music Library & Sound Recordings Archives
scleves@bgsu.edu